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Certifying Official Documents for Foreign Use

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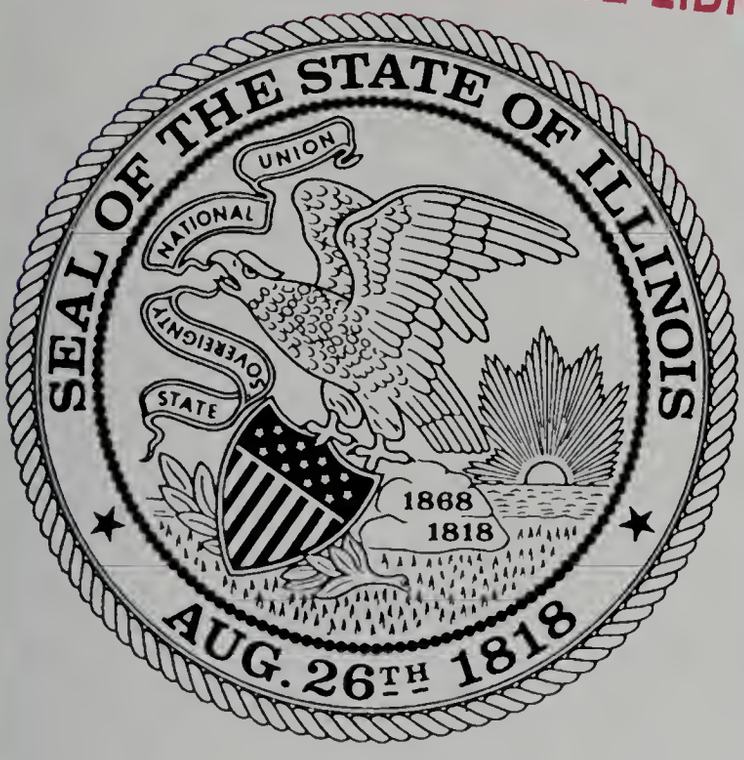

JESSE WHITE
Secretary of State

My office's Index Department is authorized to certify and process documents for foreign use.

The department certifies that the official who signed a particular document was authorized to do so. As an authorizing agent, my office will affix the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to your documents, which allows them to be recognized and accepted by foreign countries.

This brochure will help guide you in what types of certificates are available and answer some frequently asked questions about the certification process. It is my hope that by familiarizing yourself with this process our office can better expedite your documents.

I look forward to serving you.

Jesse White

JESSE WHITE
Secretary of State

For more information on certifying documents for foreign use, please contact:

Secretary of State
Index Department
111 E. Monroe St.
Springfield, IL 62756
(217) 782-7017
(217) 782-7018
Office Hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday - Friday

or

Secretary of State
Index Department
17 N. State St., Rm. 1137
Chicago, IL 60602
(312) 814-2067
(312) 793-2556
Walk-in Hours: 8-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m.
Monday - Friday
(Walk-In Service Only)

** A notary cannot certify copies of documents or signatures — they must be originals.*

** The Index Department cannot certify out-of-state officials.*

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Certifying your docu

Q. What types of certificates are there?

A. 1) **Certificate of Authority** — certifies the validity of an Illinois notary public.

2) **Certificate of Incumbency** — certifies the validity of an Illinois county clerk, circuit clerk or local registrar.

3) **Apostille** — certifies the validity of an Illinois notary public, county clerk, circuit clerk or local registrar.

Q. What type of documents do I need to obtain one of these certificates?

A. Any document that has been notarized or certified must be submitted to the Secretary of State's Index Department. Some documents require certification by the official who has custody of the original document or by the office that officially filed the document.

- *Birth certificates* should be certified copies from the county clerk, local registrar or Illinois Department of Public Health.
- *Marriage licenses* should be certified copies from the county clerk.
- *Divorce decrees* should be certified copies from the circuit clerk.
- All other documents must be notarized by an Illinois notary public.

Q. How do I obtain one of these certificates?

A. Submit a written request to the Index Department in Springfield, along with the following:

- Original document(s) to be certified, signed by the appropriate official.
- Name of the country where the document(s) will be used.

ıents for foreign use

- $2 fee **per document** made payable to the Secretary of State.
- Self-addressed, stamped envelope. Prepaid Express Mail, Priority Mail, Federal Express, UPS or Airborne Express envelopes also are accepted. You also may address the envelope to a third party.

Q. How should I mail documents to be certified to the Index Department in Springfield?

A. Express Mail, Priority Mail, Federal Express, UPS and Airborne Express are accepted. Documents also may be submitted in person at the Index Department in Springfield. (See address and hours on the back of this brochure.)

Q. How long does it take to process documents for certification?

A. Normal processing time of documents received by mail in Springfield is 5-7 business days.

Q. What are the most common reasons why documents are not certified?

A.
- Incorrect fees
- Lack of notarization or certification by the proper official
- Name of country to which the document will be used not specified
- Problem with notarization, i.e. the notary did not sign the document or did not affix his/her rubber stamp seal
- Rubber stamp seal has incorrect commission date of the notary
- Notary signature or stamp does not match the way the notary has been appointed
- School diplomas and transcripts not originally signed and notarized

JESSE WHITE
Secretary of State
Index Department
111 E. Monroe St.
Springfield, IL 62756

Place
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Here

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